

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-9, 15, 18, 19 and 22-34 are pending. By this Amendment, claim 17 is cancelled, claim 1 is amended, and new claims 26-34 are presented. Support for the amendments to claim 1 can be found, for example, in original claims 1 and 17. Support for new claims 26-34 can be found, for example, in the present specification at page 4, line 28 to page 7, line 5. No new matter is added. In view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication in the Office Action that claim 15 is allowed and that claim 17 contains allowable subject matter.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103

The Office Action rejects claims 1-9, 18, 19 and 22-25 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,270,434 to Tetart et al. ("Tetart") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,395,819 to Espiard et al. ("Espiard") and WO 01/23655 to Zeng et al. ("Zeng").

By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 17, which is indicated to recite allowable subject matter. Accordingly, amended claim 1 recites allowable subject matter. Claims 2-9, 18, 19 and 22-25 depend from claim 1 and, thus, also recite allowable subject matter.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

New Claims

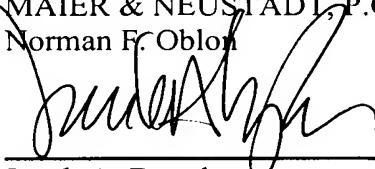
By this Amendment, new claims 26-34 are presented. New claims 26-34 depend from claim 15, which is allowed. Accordingly, claims 26-34 are believed to be patentable.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that claims 1-9, 15, 18, 19 and 22-34 are in condition for allowance. Prompt reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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